

*K Green J. the Elder, etc.*  
A FATHER'S Charge to his SON, at his  
Entrance on the Ministry. 2

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A

S E R M O N

Preached at *Marshfield*, Febr. 21.

1753.

At the ORDINATION of Mr. JOSEPH  
GREEN, Jun<sup>r</sup>. to the Pastoral Office  
over the first Church in said Town.

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By his FATHER,

Pastor of the East Church in BARNSTABLE.

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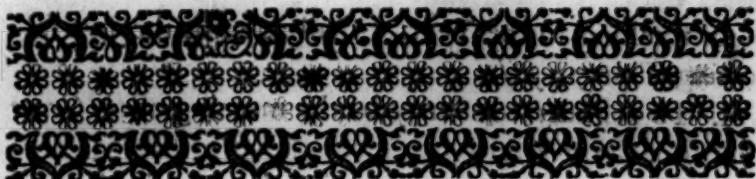
<sup>1</sup> Chron. xxii. 11, 12, 13. Now my Son, the Lord be with thee, and prosper thou, and build the House of the Lord thy God—Only the Lord give thee Wisdom and Understanding—Be strong and of good Courage, dread not, nor be dismayed.

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## A FATHER's Charge to his SON,

At his Entrance on the Ministry.

II Epist. to TIMOTHY, II Chap. 1 Ver.

*Thou therefore, my Son, be strong in the  
Grace that is in CHRIST JESUS.*

THE Words are a very serious and affectionate Admonition of the great Apostle, unto *Timothy* a Minister; which, as 'tis Apostolic, and given by Inspiration of God, may be considered as a Commandment to him, and all succeeding Ministers, and may reach them with a divine Energy; and as coming from such an One as *Paul the Aged*, unto *Timothy*, whom he calls *his Son*, may be considered as having a pointed Reference to a young Minister, and may sufficiently Warrant a natural Father to adopt his Language, and urge his Charge upon his own Son in his Entrance upon the Work of the *Evangelical Ministry*.

And this is all the *Apology* that I shall make, whatever else may be needful, and I might make, for my appearing in this *Desk* at this Time, and treating on this Subject.

In

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In speaking to the Text, I shall attempt the five following Things, scil.

I. To consider what may be the meaning of *the Grace that is in Christ Jesus*?

II. What is the Import of a being *strong* in this Grace?

III. The Importance of this to a *Minister* of Christ and his Gospel.

IV. How is the Exhortation in the Text to a being so, to be taken?

And then,

V. To consider this Exhortation, or Charge in the paternal Flow and filial Pointedness and Reference of it.

*Thou therefore, my Son, be strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus.*

I. Then, I am to consider and show, what is the Meaning of *the Grace that is in CHRIST JESUS*?

And tho' the Term *Grace*, as well as other Terms in *Divinity*, may by dark fanciful and doubtful Meanings put upon it, have been carried into a Sense ambiguous, mystical and almost unintelligible, yet it has doubtless a determinate Meaning; and will admit of a clear and rational Account to be given of it.

*Grace* in the general Notion of it, is free Favour to the unworthy; and this may help us in forming our Idea of the *divine Grace*, under our immediate Consideration. GOD is the Fountain of it, who is the GOD of all *Grace*; and all the *Graces* in the Creature, do issue from that Fountain, freely wro't and given, received and exercised, amidst and notwithstanding utter Unworthiness.

There is this Distinction to be preserved with Relation to the divine *Love*, *Mercy* and *Grace*, the Usage of all which is promiscuous in *Scripture*. *Love* communicates

Good

Good to the Creature simply considered. *Mercy* communicates Good to the Creature in Misery. *Grace* communicates Good to the Creature as unworthy. All the Drops and Measures of Goodness in the Creature, are from *Love*; when the Good is suited to the Misery of the Creature, it is *Mercy*; and when it exceeds Desert, and triumphs over Unworthiness, it is *Grace* in a special Manner. <sup>†</sup>

Now in this larger Sense, all the Gifts of *Nature*, and the Bounties of common *Providence*, tho' usually understood and spoken of in a Way of Contradistinction and Opposition unto *Grace*, are yet of *Grace*, as there is no Title of Merit in any of the Possessors to the one or the other: There could be none before Being, and none has been acquired or procured since; but all Unworthiness grows with Life.

But then, common Usage agreeably to Scripture Language, hath affixed a more restrained Meaning to this Term *Grace*, as the free Favour of God in his sovereign Good-Will towards Mankind, and his good Work in them in the Things of a spiritual Concern, relative to eternal *Salvation*, as to which, as all are Sinners, there is certainly the utmost Unworthiness.

Some do understand the *Gospel* as here meant by the *Grace that is in Christ Jesus*; which contains & opens the Plan of the Designs & Operations of the divine *Grace* respecting the *Redemption* of our revolted & unworthy World; a Scheme, which from the Foundation to the Head-Stone, demands the loudest Acclamations of *Grace Grace*, unto it: (a) The *Gospel* is called the *Grace of God*, (b) The *Gospel of the Grace of God*, (c) and the *Dispensation of the Grace of God*. (d) And

† Polhil. Spect. Theol. in Christo, p. 70. || Dr. Hammond in loc. (a) Zech. 4. 7. (b) Titus ii. 2 (c) Acts xx. 24. (d) Eph. iii. 2.

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And 'tis past Doubt, that in many Places of the New-  
Testament, the Word *Grace* signifies and intends the  
*Gospel*. (e.)

And in this View the *Apostle* is to be understood as ad-  
vising *Timothy* to strengthen himself in the Knowledge and  
Faith of the *Gospel*, and his Attachment thereto.

But then it may be as orthodox, and perhaps without  
any Force or Strain, it may be as proper to understand  
here *Grace* in Experience, as well as in the Letter, the  
*Grace* required and proffered in the *Gospel*; meaning all  
the gracious Gifts and Operations on the Mind in holy  
Principles and Actings, in a Way constantaneous to the  
rational Nature, the *Graces* of the *SPIRIT*, necessary to  
the Purposes of *Sanctification* and *Salvation*. All *Grace*  
equilite to Christians in their Places and Stations, to a  
*Minister* in his, to his shewing all good Fidelity in all  
Things, all *Grace* to help in Time of Need; suitable  
*Grace* accommodated to his Exigencies, and sufficient to  
supply his Necessities, pardoning and purifying *Grace*, en-  
lightning & enlivening *Grace*, directive & guiding *Grace*,  
assisting & strengthning *Grace*, supporting & comforting  
*Grace*, exceeding & abundant *Grace*, in the many Uses & vari-  
ous Modifications & Branches of it, to the least Instance  
and Particle of which there is nothing like any meritorious  
Claim in any of the Children of *Adam*, but they must  
all & each make the devout *Patriarch*'s honest Profession,  
*I am not worthy of the least of all the Mercies, which thou  
batt shewest to thy Servant.* (f) And this *Grace* may be said to be in *CHRIST JESUS*, in  
a variety of Respects; As He is the Purchaser of it. *Grace and Truth came  
by Jesus Christ.* (g) As

(e) *Joh*i.17. Tit.ii.17. & elsewhere.** (f) *Gen. xxxii. 10.* (g) *Joh*i.17.**

As *He* is the Repository and Fountain of it, *in whom it has pleased the Father that all Fulness should dwell*, (a) and *of his Fulness have all we received, and Grace for Grace*, (b) *Grace upon Grace*: For unto every one of us is given Grace, according to the Measure of the Gift of Christ. (c)

And as *He* is the Medium of Conveyance, and the Dispenser of it, as well as the Author and Giver of it all.

And once more, as *He* is the Exemplar of it. Grace for Grace, may, among other Things, denote the Suitability and Answerableness of Grace in Christians, in Ministers, to that in CHRIST in more abundant Measure, for *He received not the Spirit by Measure*, (d) But the Grace answering in Kind; Grace in the Copy answering to that in the Original, as the Impression to the Seal. Christ is and has exhibited the Pattern of Grace; His Glory was beheld, as of the only begotten of the Father, full of Grace & Truth. (e) Grace was poured into his Lips, (f) and the Grace in Ministers and Christians must be of the same Kind, to prove their Interest in him, and furnish them for their Duties, and qualify them for Salvation.

The Phrase, *the Grace that is in Christ Jesus*, ascribes all the Glory, as One has observed, unto Christ; and directs and leads unto Him as filling all in all. 1 Tim. 1. 14. *And the Grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant, in Faith and Love, which is in Christ Jesus.*

But I proceed to the next Thing, which is,

II. To consider what may be the Import of a being Strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus.

The Word is observ'd both in the *Verb* and *Noun*, to be very full and emphatical, expressive of Ability, Virtue and Power, in a very considerable Degree, denoting

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(a) Col. i. 19. (b) Joh. i. 16. (c) Eph. iv. 7. (d) Joh. iii. 34.  
(e) Joh. i. 14. (f) Psal. 45. 2.

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the *Resolution, Valour and Courage of Soldiers, and the Might and Force of Armies, yea frequently the Power of God, and a Strength supernatural.* So an admirable Pen (†) has glossed on the Word, and farther observed, that the *Apostle* explains what he hear megneth by a being *Strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus*, in the three Allusions in the Verses following the Text ; that of the *Soldier*, the *Combatant* in the *Grecian Games*, and the *Husbandman* : 'Tis to be hardy and intrepid, as the *Soldier* ; *Thou therefore endure Hardness as a good Soldier of Jesus Christ* ; to be *resolute & vigorous*, as the *Racer* or *Wrestler*, and *active, laborious, & patient*, as the *Husbandman*.

On the whole, it imports a being strong to *labour*, and to *bear* according to the Necessities and Exigencies of the *Christian or Ministerial Life*, in the *Vertues and Duties* of both *active and passive Life*.

But then, if we should consider the *Gospel* as here intended, a being *strong in it*, may import a being strengthened in an Acquaintance with it, and in the *Faith* of it, and an Adherence unto it, a being vigorous to *retain* it, to *defend* it, and *contend earnestly for it* ; and to endure Trials and Sufferings that may be met with for the Sake of it.

And if we understand *Grace* in the *Heart* ; the free immittered Operation and Experience of *divine Grace*, in a Principle of *gracious and holy Actions*, a being *strong* herein, may import as the *Truth of Grace* in a considerable Degree, so some Growth, and a vigorous Exercise thereof. *Timothy* had doubtless *Grace*, and that in a conspicuous Degree, to whom the *Apostle* gives the Advice to be *Strong in it*, to get it strenghtned in the *Habit*, and to be vigorous in the *Actings* of it.

And

{†} The late excellent Dr. *Colman*, in his Sermon on this Text, at the Ordination of the late Reverend Mr. *William Cooper*.

And then as Things are sometimes better seen and more clearly illustrated when set in *Contrast*, it may be said here,

1. That a being *strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus*, may be considered, in Opposition to *Christians*, to *Ministers own Strength*.

*Not by Might, nor by Power of their own, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts* (a) *Not that we are sufficient of our selves, to think any Thing as of our selves, but our Sufficiency is of God, who also hath made us able Ministers of the New Testament.* (b)

In their own Strength there is no standing, it must not therefore be confided in, or leaned upon, but they must be beholden to a foreign Power *superior* to their own, *Strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might*: (c) *In the Lord must they have both their Righteousness and Strength*, (d) and be strengthened according to the *Ribes of his Glory with Might by his Spirit in the inner Man*; (e) as the *Word is used to express the divine Power, thro' Christ which strengtheneth me.* (f) *Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me*: (g) *'Tis to be strong in his Grace which is sufficient, whose Strength is made perfect in Weakness,* (h) *ordaining Strength out of the Mouths of Babes and Sucklings,* (i) *that they may glory in their Infirmitie, that the Power of Christ may rest upon them.*

But then,

2. To be *strong* may be considered in Opposition to *Weakness* in this *Grace*.

Nor *Christians* nor *Ministers* are to be as the *Babes or Children in Christ*, who are weak, having attained to but low and feeble Measures of *Grace*, and are therefore able to do but little, and to bear less.

But

(a) Zech. iv. 6. (b) 2 Cor. iii. 5, 6. (c) Eph. vi. 10. (d) Isai. xlvi. 24. (e) Eph. iii. 16. (f) Phil. 4. 13. (g) 1 Tim. i. 12. (h) 2 Cor. 12. 9. (i) Psal. 8. 3.

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But as Men in Christ advanced from Strength to Strength, to the Stature and Strength of such, waxing stronger and stronger, going on to Perfection, to do the Work of, and suffer (if called to such a Thing) as becomes, perfect Men, arrived unto the Measure of the Stature of the Fulness of CHRIST. (a)

3. It may be considered as importing Stability in Opposition to Fickleness.

Inconstancy will follow upon Weakness, but Strength in Grace will be the Establishment of the Heart. Abraham staggered not at the Promise of God thro' Unbelief; but was strong in Faith, giving Glory to God. (b)

'Tis a good Thing that the Heart be established with Grace, (c) the Grace of the Gospel, and an inward Principle of it, which will prevent a being carried away with divers and strange Doctrines, as Children are tossed to and fro by a wavering Humour.

Where Grace is but feeble, such will be as a Reed shaken with the Wind, tottering to every Blast; but the Strengthned will be established, rooted and grounded, so as to weather Storms, which will be but as a Blast against the Wall, and a Pillar of Marble.

To be strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus, is then to have a Constancy of Mind, divinely established in the Truth, and settled in the Love of the Gospel, and engaged in the Cause of it, so as to be ready to appear in it's Defence, and encounter Hazards, for the sake of it, and to have a fixed & growing Principle of gracious Operations.

4. It may import Courage in Opposition to Cowardice.

Courage is Strength, but Cowardize argues a weak and degenerate Mind.

This

(a) Eph. iv. 13. (b) Rom. iv. 20. (c) Heb. xiii. 9.

This Advice to *Timothy* may be taken, as perhaps it was given, with Reference to the Account given by the *Apostle*, Ch. 1. v. 15. of many shewing their Pusillanimity and base Cowardice, in sneaking away from the *Apostle*, and deserting the Cause of the *Gospel*, on which Occasion the *Apostle* exhorts *Timothy* to be strong, to make a vigorous and bold Stand, to be constant to the *Truth*, and valiant for it, to arm himself with a sacred Fortitude and Bravery, and thus steeled and furnished to set out and go on in his Work.

And thus good Interpreters have taken this Exhortation as analogous to the Charge given to *Joshua*, (a) Be strong and of good Courage; only be thou strong and very courageous. And that of *David* to his Son *Solomon*, (b) Be strong and of good Courage, dread not, nor be dismayed.

Again,

5. It may be said to import *Activity* and *Labour*, in Opposition to *Sloth* and *Languor*.

As the three Allusions in the Context do plainly intimate, which are each and all a Rebuke to *Sloth*, as a Contradiction to the *Character*, and import contrawise intense Labour.

*Strength* is for *Use*, and it is insignificant without proportionable Application & Exercise. 'Tis *active* laborious *Fortitude* that is demanded, with the Prohibition of all *Sloth* and *Indolence*, as incompatible to the *Christian* and *Ministerial* Calling, as well as to the *Character* of a *Soldier*, a *Combatant*, and an *Husbandman*; and as much of a Reproach to a *Christian* and a *Minister*, as for the *Soldier's* Sword to rust in the Scabbard, when he is called into the Field, with the Jeopardy of his own Life, to sheath it in the Blood of his Enemies; for the *Racer* to

(a) *Josh.* i. 6, 7. (b) *2 Chron.* xxii. 13.

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be languid, and yet think to reach the Goal and win the Laurel ; and for the Husbandman to be a Loiterer, and yet think to be a Partaker of the Fruits.

Once more,

6. It may be said to import *Patience* and *Long-suffering*, in Opposition to *Fainting* and *Decay*.

*Passive Fortitude* is here required as necessary ; if Christians or Ministers faint under Sufferings, their Strength is small ; (a) but they must be strong to bear as well as to labour ; Strengthned with all Might, according to his glorious Power, unto all Patience and Long-suffering with Joyfulness. (b)

To be strong in this Grace, is inconsistent with all Declension, and giving over, let what will come : 'tis to be stedfast, immovable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord ; the Husbandman waiteth for the precious Fruits of the Earth, and hath long Patience.—Be ye also patient ; establish your Hearts, for the Coming of the Lord draweth nigh. (c)

And Ministers must approve themselves the Ministers of God in much Patience, in Afflictions, in Necessities, in Distresses. (d)

But I now proceed to the next Thing propounded, which is,

III. To consider the vast Importance of a being strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus, to a Minister of Christ.

As Timothy was such an one to whom it is here given in Charge to be so.

'Tis of all Importance to all Christians, as their Work, and what they may meet with in the securing and prosecuting

(a) Prov. 24. 10. (b) Col. i. 11. (c) Jam. v. 7,8. (d) 2 Cor. 6. 4.

secuting their Salvation, will require all the *Strength* of this *Grace* that they can get the Benefit of ; but to a *Minister* 'tis in a special Manner a Matter of the utmost Importance, as may appear, whether we consider his *Labours* or his *Sufferings*, or his *Temptations*.

1. Considering his *Labours* & *Duties*, which are many and arduous. All laborious Services do call for *Strength* to go thro' them, and the *Ministerial* do require great Degrees of *Strength* in *Grace* to the faithful Discharge of them.

The *Minister* has the *Labours* and *Duties* of all *Christians* in common to go through ; he has as much to do in the working out his own *Salvation* as have any ; he has a *Soul* of his own to look to, that needs to be *saved*, and is in as much Danger of being lost and perishing, as any of their's to whom he Ministers, if not in more Danger in some Respects : He has as much lying upon him, and as much to do to get his *Soul* cured & cleansed, as have any others, and perhaps more than some ; as much *Labour* with his own *Heart*, is necessary to get the mastery of his own *Corruptions*, *Passions* and *Appetites*, to get and keep in an holy Frame for *Communion* with *God*, for the Presence and Influences of his *holy Spirit*, and to *escape the Wrath to come*, and to get fit for *Heaven* ; as much of this *Labour* is necessary in a *Minister*, as in any *Christian*, and as much *Labour*, *Care* and *Duty* are incumbent on him, as to the *Observance* of religious *Means* and *Ordinances*, and in his whole *Life*, as in any : He has the same *Duties* inward and outward to attend himself, that he presses on others : He has the same *Devil* to resist and overcome, that he calls upon others to withstand and vanquish ; the same *Hell* to avoid, that he warns others to *flee from*, and by the *Terror* of the *Lord* *persuades them* ; and

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and the same *Hedonistick* to prepare for, that he sets before others, and invites them unto in alluring Language, the same *Grace* to secure, to fit him for it, that he urges upon others; and the same *Way* to take himself unto it, *strait* and *narrow*, and yet thorny & rugged to the Flesh, that he lays open unto others.

¶ And besides, and additional to all the Duties of *Christians* in common, there are the peculiar and eminent *Labours* and *Duties* of the *Ministry*, lying with Weight upon him.

The *Ministry* is a Burden which the Shoulders of *Angels* may tremble under; a Work honourable indeed, great and good, but hard and heavy.

The *Minister* in Comparison of *Christians* in common, must be in *Labours more abundant*, with *GOD*, with himself, and with others.

If we should set our selves to survey the *Duties* and *Services* of the *ministerial Office*, there would open a large *Field*; and it must be owned to be an *Employment* full of *Labour*.

Both the *private* and the *more publick*, are laborious *Services*.

The *private* in the *Study*, in *Preparations* for the *Pulpit*, to bring *beaten Oyl* into the *Sanctuary*; a great *Labour in the Word and Doctrine*, which has in it the *Racking* of the *Invention*, the *Labour* of the *Brain* in *much study*, *which is a Weariness to the Flesh*, and bringeth the *Sense* of *intellectual Pains*, and the *exhausting* of the *animal Spirits*; this *Labour* of the *Head* and *Heart* to find out *seasonable* and *suitable Themes*, and to set *in order acceptable Words*, in *Words of Truths*, and the *Doctrine that is according to Godliness*; as that wherein he must

must spend and be spent ; is very expensive and wearing : And besides this, his inward Pains must be great with his own Heart, to work it up to a suitable Frame, that he may bring lively Affections into his publick Appearances, and carry on the publick Performances with decent Solemnity and to *Edification*, as well as attend them to his own Improvement in *Devotion* as a *Christian*.

Thus in his giving his *Attendance to Reading, to Exhortation, to Doctrine, to Meditation and Prayer*, and be so in them, as that his profiting may appear to all, his Labour must be great.

And among his peculiar *private Duties*, there is that of *visiting to know the State of the Flock*, to get acquainted with their various Characters as well as Circumstances, that he may know how in the best Manner to address them, and accommodate himself to them both in private & publick, treating them wisely, agreeably & faithfully ; instructing, advising and admonishing, as Occasion requires ; praying with the sick and afflicted, informing the ignorant, strengthening the weak, comforting the miserable, refuting the erroneous, frowning on the vicious, and speaking a Word in Season to them that are weary ; and in all prudent Ways commanding *Holiness*, and alluring unto it ; but discountenancing Sin, and witnessing against it ; and all making a very difficult Task.

Many are the Urgencies to this *ministerial Service* in *private particular Applications*, oft returning, and sometimes very pressing, and attended with much Difficulty, and calling for the more Labour, and some that may call to a publick Notice in both praying and preaching.

And the *feeding the Lambs* may be reckoned among those *private Duties*, who, as they are the Hopes of the

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*Flock*, are not to be neglected in the *Ministratiōn* ; and here, what Labour of Attention, Prudence and Condescension is called for ?

And then, there are the well-known *publick Services* and Labours of the *Minister* in his going before the worshipping Assembly, in all instituted *Ordinances* of Worship, and as the Head of them, carrying them on, some in the Name and Stead of the Assembly, and all of them in the Name of GOD, and by Authority from him, *Praying* as their Mouth ; as to which he must labour with himself, that he may be well acquainted with the Wants and Desires of the *Congregation*, and that he may be versed in the *Grace, Gift, and Spirit of Prayer*, and in this he is to labour fervently with GOD, striving and *wrestling* with him for his Blessing.

And the *Preaching the Word* as the Mouth of GOD unto the People : And here great Labour is necessary, that it may be done *skilfully, purely, plainly, and faithfully*, and with a Solemnity agreeable to the Nature and Importance of *divine heavenly Things* ; and herein he is to labour with the People, to their being *born again, converted and healed, edified and saved*.

There is the *administering the special Seals* to the *Covenant of Grace*, as to which there is necessary great Labour of *Love, Wisdom, Prudence, Impartiality, Seriousness, and Devotion*, that he may do all with the *Fidelity and Solemnity*, becoming a *Steward of these heavenly Mysteries*.

And then, 'tis his Duty to *administer the holy Discipline* of GOD's House, in *admonishing* as well as *rebuking* and *putting away* the openly and obstinately scandalous, and *absolving* and *restoring* the penitent upon the credible *Exhibition of Repentance* : And here difficult Service,

yice, and hard Labour of Mind with a Witness will be found. The *pastoral Care* in the Government of the Church in this Instance will be no small Labour. "All Government is a Burden, as One has obsevred, + but no Rule calls for more Care and Wisdom and *Grace*, than that which lies on a *Minister*.

And then, his *Duties* run thro' his whole Conversation; his Labour in all Things must be *that the Ministry be not blamed*, but that his Life be so ordered, as to be worthy of the *Christian* and the *Minister*, as an *Example* to the whole Flock, as well as their vigilant *Overseer*.

Now in this View of Things, the vast Importance of his being *strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus*, may appear, he, having such Services upon him, so much to do ever and every where, no Time to be idle, being taken up in so continual Labours for and among his People, that he has but little Time *abstractedly* for himself, and *seperately* working out his own *Salvation*, he must need vast Strength, superiour to his own, as well as Wisdom to go thro' all his Round of Duties and Labours.

The *Apostle*, aware of his Danger on all Accounts, exercised a special lively Caution as to himself, and laboured with himself more abundantly. 1 Cor. 9. 27. *But I keep under my Body and bring it into Subjection, lest that by any Means when I have preached to others, I my self should be a Cast-away.*

2. Considering his *Sufferings* that he may look for.

He may expect the common Evils attendant on human Life; as *Man is born unto Trouble, as the Sparks fly upward.* \* He must look to take his Lot and have his

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Share in this Portion of Mankind *under the Sun*. And as a *Man of like Passions with others*, the Troubles of Life may be tho't to have his human Resentments, and to make the like Impressions on him that they do on others.

But then, as a *Minister* he may over and above find himself appointed to peculiar *Sufferings*.

The *Ministry*, as the World goes, is an obnoxious Station : He may indeed bring Sufferings upon himself by his own Indiscretions ; or if he be not faithful or honest, but negligent in his Business ; or if he be vicious in his Life, and let such an One bear his own Burden as he can, but the World will scarce make the candid and charitable Allowances for such an one as for another, but Things will be unmercifully exaggerated.

But then, if he be never so faithful, he may count upon nothing more certainly, than *Sufferings* of one Kind or another, and an heavy Load of them. Such is the Nature and Design of his Office, that he will have much to bear from the World and from *Satan the Accuser of the Brethren*. Men's exorbitant Lusts will be irritated, and it will be next to impossible to both please and profit all to Edification.

He has to do with Persons of very different Tastes, Humours, Education and Circumstances. Some may be exceptious and apt to take Disgust and Prejudice at the *Person* of the *Minister* or the *Truth* delivered by him, if not given out by him in their own Way, or if it thwart their pre-conceived Notions, or if it comes near in a Way of Rebuke to any darling Lust or Interest ; and in many other Ways will Offences come.

That

That if he meet not with *Persecution* in all the cruel Forms of it that have been known, yet will he be likely to be taken up into the *Lips of Talkers*, and suffer the *Scourge of the Tongue*, and the Burden of *Contempt* and *Poverty*, and other Sufferings will be laid upon him.

And tho' a Minister is to be a Pattern of *Self-Denial* and *Mortifiedness* to the World, yet as he has humane Resentments, he must be supposed to feel his Burden.

And then the *Devil* will not be wanting to lay on all the *Sufferings* he can, to clog him in his Work, to hinder him and retard him in his Course.

That having so much to suffer as a *Minister* will find he has, it is of all Importance to him, that he be *strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus*.

3. Considering his *Temptations*, which are also peculiar and great, besides his *Sufferings*, which are his *Temptations*.

He will meet with his *Temptations* from his own *evil Heart*, from the *World*, and from the *Devil the Tempter*, who will be busie with him in the *Study*, in the *Pulpit*, and in his whole *Conversation*; his *Temptations to Pride*, to Sloth and Negligence, to Flattery and Cowardize, to cloud or maim, or adulterate the *Truth*, or handle it deceitfully, or to give over all, resolving to *speak no more in the Name of the Lord*.

A *Minister* is as liable to *Temptations*, as to *Sufferings*, and in this View also, in Regard of this his Situation, he needs to be *strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus*.

When St. *Paul* himself was tempted, what was the *Answer of the Lord* unto his *Prayer* under his *Temptation*,

*My*

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*My Grace is sufficient for thee ; for my Strength is made perfect in Weakness.* 2 Cor. 12. 9. And that was all to gratify his Desire, and answer to, and supply his Necessity.

But I pass to the fourth Thing propounded.

IV. To consider, how the Exhortation in the Text to be *strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus*, is to be taken ?

And here in two Words only,

As importing the *Apostle's* Wish, and breathing his vehement Desire that *Timothy* might be so.

As he was a Well-wisher to *Timothy*, he expresses his Regards to him in this, as the highest and best of his Wishes for him, with this as the Sum of all he blesses him.

*Grace* is the *Apostle's* Benediction in his *Epistles* to him, which is also the *Token* in every of his *Epistles*, and when he would comprehend all his Desire in his Behalf, to his being a *good Minister of Jesus Christ*, as well as *Christian* ; he utters this as his Wish for him, as that which would make him both the one and the other, that he might above all Things be *strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus*, according to the Necessity and Importance of the Thing.

2. As carrying his *Excitement* to *Timothy*, in Order to his being so.

If the Word be not active, strengthen thy self, yet doth it import *Paul's* putting *Timothy* upon stirring up himself, his Care and laborious Endeavours in Prayer and Study, that he might be strengthned in this *Grace*, without which active laborious Endeavours of his own, he could not without Presumption ever expect to be made *strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus*.

The

The last Thing proposed is,

V. To consider this *Admonition* in the paternal Flow and filial Pointedness and Reference of it.

It comes from a Father's Heart, cloathed with the Authority, and expressive of the tender Affection, of one in that Relation, to *Timothy*, the *Apostle's own Son in the Faith*, (a) his dearly beloved Son, so called, and owned by him. (b)

St. *Paul* may be herein viewed in a diversity of Lights; as an *Apostle*, and so a *Father* of the *Church*; he might be much bold in *Christ* to enjoin on *Timothy*, and all the ordinary Ministers, that which is convenient & necessary.

He was a *Minister* himself, and so was *Timothy*, and one *Minister* may admonish another in *Love* and *Duty*.

And he was an *aged Minister* to *Timothy*, such an one as *Paul the Aged*. (c) And such an one may advise & charge a Younger, and the *Admonition* will come with still greater Propriety, as well as Authority, than from some *Equal* or *Junior* in Age.

And *Paul*, 'tis likely, had been *Timothy's spiritual Father*, by whom he had been begotten thro' the *Gospel*, and *Timothy* probably was like to him, and this gave the *Apostle* a mighty Advantage of Access to him.

Upon all, this appears to be a proper Charge from a Father, to come from a Father's Heart & Authority, the best Wish he can have and express, for the Son of his *Loves* and *Hopes*, having enough and all to insinuate and to make it impressive and influential.

But the Time is now well nigh spent, which urges to a coming to a close. And if I now pass the several instructive

(a) 1 Eph. 1 Ch. 2. (b) 2 Eph. 1 Ch. 2. (c) Philem. Ver. 9.

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instructive Inferences and Uses relative to both *Ministers*, elder and younger, and to *People*, and forbear to urge the Arguments of Terror and Allurement, that might be found deducible from and proper to impress and enforce this Exhortation ; I trust the Audience will forgive me this *Wrong* ; while I am conscious to my self of my unfitness to suggest any Thing in set Form to the former, and for the latter, they are daily better instructed.

But yet, I may not break off, till I have address'd the *Parties* more especially concerned in the Solemnities of this Day, the *Pastor elect*, and the *Flock and Congregation* of this Place, that have called him to take the *Oversight of them in the Lord*.

And I first turn my self and my Speech to You, *my Son, the Son of my Vows*, who, by the divine Leave, are now about to have the *Dispensation of the Grace of God committed to your Trust*. And if I am not an *Apostle, a Minister, a Father unto others*, yet doubtless unto You.

As I have devoted you unto the Service of the *Sanctuary*, I bless GOD that I live to see so far the completion of my Wishes and Hopes as this Day brings with it, and presents unto me.

And as it is at your Desire that I have now preached upon this Occasion, I hope you will give the more earnest Heed to what has been spoken. And what more proper Text could I have brought you on this Occasion, more expressive of a Father's Heart, in it's highest Affections Wishes and Prayers, or better directive unto you in your new-entrance upon the *Work of the Lord*, than this that has been discoursed unto. Take then my Heart in this Charge, that I would impress upon You with

with a Father's Authority and Tenderness, but more and all as coming from the highest ; that is, divine Authority ; *I* *thou therefore, my Son, be strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus.*

Let me lead you at your Induction into the Ministry, to the Grace that is in Christ Jesus, into admiring Views and Acknowledgments of it, that, if you are any Thing by the Gifts of Nature, and by the Blessing of God on your Education, or by any *special gracious* Operations on your Heart ; that may be the humble grateful Acknowledgment of your Heart and Lips, *By the Grace of God I am what I am* ; (a) Or if you should do any Thing considerable, and to any good Purpose in the Gospel of God's dear Son, you may still say, *Not I, but the Grace of God with me.* (b) Now and ever admire the Grace of our Lord as exceeding abundant towards you in Faith, and Love that is in Christ Jesus ; (c) thank Christ Jesus who hath enabled you, for that he has counted you so far faithful, as to put you into the Ministry ; (d) saying, *Who am I, and what is my Father's House, that thou hast bro's me hitherto.* And say after the humble Apostle, *Unto me who am less than the least of all Saints, is this Grace given, that I should preach—the unsearchable Riches of Christ.* (e)

In this Grace and Strength set out and go on in the Work of the Lord, in the Power and Spirit of the Lord, waxing strong in Spirit, and having the Grace of God upon you.

I salute You in your Entrance into the Lord's Vineyard, in the Words of the ancient Patriarch, *God be gracious to thee, my Son* ; (f) and wish the Apostle's Benediction to Timothy, *Grace to thee, and be strong in this*

D *in the exercise of thy Ministry.* Grace ;

(a) 1 Cor. xv. 10. (b) ibid. (c) 1 Tim. i. 14. (d) Ver. 12.  
(e) Eph. iii. 8. (f) Gen. xlvi. 29.

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*Grace* ; get strengthned in the *Gospel* by close Study, and much and fervent Prayer for the Supplies of the *Spirit*, that you may the better *preach* it, and be the better able to *defend* it.

And see to it, that you have the *Grace of Jesus Christ* in you of a Truth. I trust you are not a Stranger unto it ; but you must look well to this your self, as it is necessary to your own Salvation that you have it, and to your being found faithful in *the Work of the LORD*.

And let your whole *Ministry* breathe the *Grace that is in Christ Jesus* ; I mean not that the *Word* be used as a *Charm*, or so as to lead People into wrong *Notions* of the *Christian Scheme*, or aside from the *Duties* of the *Christian Life* ; but let it be the *Centre*, as it were, wherein the *Lines* of your *Ministry* meet, so as that when the *natural Perfections* of *God* are discoursed upon, the *Glory* of them may be spread and seen the better, in the *Face* and *Grace* of *Jesus Christ* ; and when *moral Duties*, as they are called, are necessary to be insisted upon, their *Principle*, *Vertue* and *Acceptableness*, must be shown to be entirely in the *Grace that is in Christ Jesus* ; and so in other Instances.

And tho' I would not have you to amuse your *Hearers* with *Matters of doubtful Disputation*, or to spend your *Labours* on lesser meer speculative *Notions*, that affect not the *real Life* of *Christianity*, yet let the *Doctrines* and *Duties* that bear the *Impress* and *Glory* of the *divine Grace* in a *special Manner* be the *reigning Topics* and *favourite Vein* of your *Ministry*. And remember, that this *Grace* is not to supersede or preclude your *Diligence* or *Labour* in your *Studies*, and other *Services*, but to put you on being the more laborious and painful in all your *Ministerial*

ßerial Course ; and you owe Respects and Labours to this People, who have been so agreed in the Choice that they have made of You.

And in your *whole Life* make manifest the *Savour of this Grace*, your *Conversation*, *ministring Grace* to the *Hearers*.

And labour to be *strong in this Grace*, as knowing that you are *to build the House of the Lord*, and the *great Work* will require all the Strength that you can get ; Be much in *Prayer* then for the *Supplies of the Spirit of Grace*, and *Strength of Christ Jesus*.

Here we station you, and here I leave you ; not *knowing the Things that may befall you* ; but knowing this, that the *Grace that is in Christ Jesus* is free for you, full and sufficient to enable you to, and carry you thro', all that you may be called to do and to suffer : To that *Grace* I commend you and leave you, as *Paul his Son Timothy*, in the close, as well as the beginning of his *Epistles* unto him.

Now, my Son, *the Lord be with thee, and prosper thou, and build the House of the Lord by God* ; only the *Lord give thee Wisdom and Understanding* ; be *strong and of good Courage*, *dread not, nor be dismayed*. (a) *Go in this thy Might, the Might of thy strong Redeemer, stand and feed this Flock in the Strength and Majesty of the Lord, and stand in thy Lot to the End of thy Days.*

*The Grace of JESUS CHRIST be with thy Spirit, my Son, my Son.*

And then, for You the *Beloved and honoured Church and Congregation*, usually assembling in this *House of the Lord*.

D 2

We

(a) 1 Chron. xxii. 11, 12.

We all rejoice with You in your peaceable Re-settlement this Day ; and on my Part, would I acknowledge, and leave with you a publick Testimony of, my *Gratitude* for the Esteem and Respect wherewith you have treated my Son from his first coming among you ; and wish he may deserve and still have them, as may be for your and his mutual Advantage.

Your general Agreement in the Choice of him, and in Things relating to his Encouragement hitherto, has so far swayed with me, that I cannot *withold my Son, my only Son, from you*, but at the Call of Providence, as I judge, I clearly resign him to the Service of your *Souls*.

We hope your good Agreement hitherto, may be an *auspicious Omen* upon you, a *Token for Good*, that GOD the LORD will dwell among you, as a GOD of *Love and Peace*.

But as 'tis too well known, that such *balcyon Days* are critical precarious Seasons, you have need to watch and guard against every Thing that may be likely to break your *Peace*, and disturb your *Order*. And there can be no better Security for you in this Case, than for you yourselves to be *strong also in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus*. Not only *Joshua the Son of Josedeck the High-Priest*, but *all the People of the Land*, are exhorted to be *strong to the building of the Temple*. (a) Be ye then also *enlarged and strengthened*.

*Grace* is the *Apostle's Salutation to Churches, Grace and Peace*, as well as to *Ministers*. And we do you to wit, we do notify you of the *Grace of God bestowed on the Churches of Macedonia*. (b) In this *Grace* ye will stand. And now

(a) Hag. ii. 4. (b) 2 Cor. viii. 1.

now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord, (a) Watch ye, stand fast in the Faith, quit ye like Men, be strong. (b)

As you have chosen him, who may be presently put in Trust with the *Gospel of the Grace of God*, to take the *Pastoral Care* of you in the Lord, he now devotes himself, his Talents, what he has, his Time and his Life, to the Service of your Souls: Receive him then as one of the *Ascension Gifts* of CHRIST unto his Church, unto you in particular. And it will be of Advantage to you to cherish an Esteem of him for his Work and Office Sake.

This my Son is young and tender, despise not his Youth, and the House that is to be builded is for the Lord, and must be exceeding magnifical. (c) Let him then have your Hearts and Hands with him, to help him in the great Work. Do nothing to weaken his Hands or discourage his Heart in a Way of unreasonable Exception or Prejudice, or by Division among your selves; but do all to help him; as he is a Worker with God, so do you Work together with him.

Let me ask your Help of him by your Prayers. Bow your Knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole Family in Heaven and Earth is named, that he would grant Him according to the Riches of his Glory, to be strengthened with Might by his Spirit in the inner Man. (d) And help him by outward Support and Encouragement; that free from the Encumbrances and Avocations of the World, he may give himself to Prayer & the Ministry of the Word, and be wholly therein. And help him by hearty friendly Advices & Counsels, as they may be needed and seasonable. And above all help him by a steady Attention

(a) 1 Thef. iii. 8. (b) 1 Cor. xvi. 13. (c) 1 Chron. xxii. 5.

(d) Eph. iii. 14, 15, 16.

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dance on the Dispensation of the Grace of God, and a candid Attention to the Messages he brings you of the Grace that is in Christ Jesus, and by making your Profiting to appear *unto all*, in being thriving Christians, in Wisdom, in Knowledge & true Holiness. Give him not Occasion to complain of your Leanness, but great Occasion to rejoice in your Fruifulness, in every good Word and Work. And strive every Way to be his *Joy and Crown*, both now, and in the Day of Christ's appearing.

I leave with you those Words of the Apostle Peter, 2 Eph. 3. 18. *But grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; to him be Glory both now and for ever. AMEN.*

**F N I S.**

